

Najib reiterates Sedition Act pledge
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Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said he will honour his pledge on the Sedition Act following a hotly contested election in May.

"We will amend the act but we want to keep Malaysia peaceful and harmonious," Najib told BBC World News yesterday in London.

He said that the law was only used against those who undermined stability.

Najib had promised to repeal the Sedition Act (1948) last year, along with other security legislation that dates from the British colonial era.

The Malaysian opposition says that the prime minister has used the sedition law to make needless arrests. It says the continuing delay in repealing it proves that Najib is not an "honourable man".

In his BBC interview, Najib accused the opposition of being "populist and irresponsible" during the election which saw big losses for the ruling coalition in urban areas.

He said that his government had repealed the Internal Security Act - which correspondents say has often used to detain anti-government activists - in addition to bringing an end to detentions without trial.

"We have shown an awful lot of latitude to people who protest against the government," he said, "but people cannot say something that will undermine the stability of our country."

Najib stressed that his government would not allow any protests that were not peaceful and political change in his country would have to come "from within".

He said Malaysia had enjoyed 55 years of peace and stability since independence and there was "no basis for people to go onto the streets".

Najib is in Britain for the start of Battersea Power Station redevelopment project. The mixed-development multi-billion-ringgit project, on the south bank of River Thames, is being undertaken by the Malaysian consortium of Sime Darby Bhd, SP Setia Bhd and Employees Provident Fund (EPF).

Bernama reports that Najib is also scheduled to meet British Prime Minister David Cameron on Thursday. - July 3, 2013.

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